

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

1. – 23. (*Cancelled*)

24. (*Currently amended*) PLGA plasticized with ethanol, obtained with a process comprising the following steps:

- a) grinding PLGA to obtain a ground product in which the particles have dimensions less than 250  $\mu\text{m}$ ;
- b) adding ethanol to the ground product obtained in the preceding step in concentrations between 5 and 20 parts by weight/weight of PLGA and heating the mixture obtained to a temperature between 45 and 65°C, until a viscous and stable gel is obtained;
- c) drying the product coming from step (b),
- d) grinding the dried product obtained at a temperature ranging from –20 and +5°C;
- e) optionally mixing the product originating from the preceding step with PLGA as such which has been previously ground until a ground product of particle size less than 250  $\mu\text{m}$  is obtained, in weight ratios between 10:90 and 99:1, at a temperature between –20 and +5°C,
- f) extruding the aforesaid mixture at 75°C, and
- g) grinding the extruded product at a temperature between -20°C and +5°C; ~~and~~
- ~~h) optionally mixing active ingredients with PLGA plasticized with ethanol obtained by step g);~~

25. (*Previously presented*) Plasticized PLGA as claimed in claim 24 containing ethanol in concentrations between 2 and 15 % by weight on the weight of PLGA.

26. (*Previously presented*) Plasticized PLGA as claimed in claim 25 wherein said ethanol

concentrations are comprised between 3 and 10% by weight on the weight of PLGA.

27. *(Previously presented)* Plasticized PLGA as claimed in claim 25 wherein said concentrations are between 5 and 10% by weight on the weight of PLGA.

28. *(Previously presented)* Plasticised PLGA according to claim 24, wherein in step (b) the ethanol is added in a quantity of 10 parts by weight/weight of PLGA.

29. *(Previously presented)* Plasticised PLGA according to claim 24, wherein in step (d) the drying is conducted until obtaining an ethanol concentration in PLGA comprised between 10 and 30%/by weight/PLGA weight.

30. *(Previously presented)* Plasticised PLGA according to claim 29 wherein said ethanol concentration is 20% by weight/PLGA weight.

31. *(Previously presented)* Plasticised PLGA according to claim 29, wherein said drying is carried out at a temperature comprised between 20 and 25°C under an air stream.

32. *(Previously presented)* Plasticised PLGA as claimed in claim 24, wherein the grinding temperature in step (d), (e) and (g) is -10°C.

33. *(Previously presented)* Plasticised PLGA as claimed in claim 24 wherein in step (e) the weight ratio of PLGA originating from step (d)/PLGA as such is comprised between 16:84 and 40:60.

34. *(Previously presented)* Subcutaneous implants obtained by extrusion, containing an active principle dispersed in PLGA plasticized with ethanol as claimed in claim 24.

35. *(Previously presented)* Subcutaneous implants as claimed in claim 34 containing thermolabile active principles.

36. *(Previously presented)* Subcutaneous implants as claimed in claim 35, wherein said thermolabile active principles are chosen from the class consisting of: proteins, vaccines,

antibodies and vectors for genic therapy.

37. (*Previously presented*) A process for preparing a subcutaneous implant obtained by extrusion containing an active principle dispersed in PLGA plasticized with ethanol according to claim 24, comprising the following steps:

- i) mixing the active principle with the plasticized PLGA as claimed in claim 24, at a temperature between -20°C and +5°C,
- ii) extruding the ground product originating from step (i) at a temperature less than 70°C.

38. (*Previously presented*) The process as claimed in claim 37, wherein the temperature of step (i) is -10°C.

39. (*Previously presented*) The process as claimed in claim 37 wherein the temperature of step (ii) is less than 60°C when plasticized PLGA containing when plasticized PLGA containing ethanol at concentrations between 3 and 4% by weight on the weight of PLGA is used in step (i).

40. (*Previously presented*) The process as claimed in claim 38, wherein the temperature of step (ii) is equal to 40°C, when plasticized PLGA containing ethanol at concentrations between 5 and 10% by weight/ weight of PLGA is used.